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May 4, 1981

URGENT MEMORANDA RE EAST TIMOR

1. New initiative by Portugal and the UN Secretary-General to solve the East Timor problem

The following item appeared in the Melbourne AGE, April 28, 1981:

AGE 28 April 81 p.7

# New Timor move

LISBON, 27 April. — Portugal is to make a new bid to resolve the problem of East Timor. The Government has asked the United Nations Secretary-General, Dr Waldheim, to form a special commission to examine the question, and has invited him to discuss the move in Portugal next month, according to reliable diplomatic sources.

The initiative follows the breakdown of a proposal made last year by then Prime Minister Francisco Sa Carneiro, killed in December in an air crash, to involve Indonesia in talks on East Timor. The territory has remained under military occupation since 1975 despite UN resolutions calling on Indonesia to withdraw. Sporadic resistance is continuing from Fretilin guerilla forces, according to Timor refugees arriving in Portugal.

The Leftist weekly, 'Jornal', also citing diplomatic sources, said Dr Waldheim had already accepted the Portuguese invitation and was expected in Lisbon in the first fortnight of May.

Last September Dr Sa Carneiro proposed talks between "all interested parties" over the future of Timor. These were specified as Portugal, Indonesia, Australia, the ASEAN countries, the United States, Japan, EEC countries and Portugal's former African colonies. Indonesia never officially responded, and Portugal failed to win support from any senior Western nation.

—JILL JOLLIFE.

In view of the fact

that no genuine act of self-determination has been conducted in East Timor;
that the East Timorese continue to bitterly oppose integration with Indonesia and aspire to self-determination in numerous ways;
that the UN endorses the right of the East Timorese to self-determination;
that both the UN and Portugal regard Portugal as the legal administering authority of East Timor;
and that the Fretilin representative at the UN, Jose Ramos Horta, has publicly endorsed Portugal's renewed diplomatic efforts to find a diplomatic solution to the East Timor problem based on self-determination;

the ACFOA (Australian Council for Overseas Aid) sub-committee on East Timor strongly urges you and/or your organisation to communicate to both the UN Secretary General (Mr Waldheim) and the Portuguese Government your

endorsement of their joint initiative towards a resolution of the conflict.

Communications to: The Secretary-General,
United Nations,
New York 10017 NY

Telex: UNations New York 23 222 422 +
UNations New York 230 126 171 +

and His Excellency Francisco Balsemao,
Primeiro Ministro de Portugal,
Palacio do Governo,
Lisboa, Portugal.

ACFOA has sent the following telegram to both the UN and to Portugal:

"The Australian Council for Overseas Aid strongly endorses your reported initiative to seek a solution to the problem of East Timor and wishes you every success in this important mission. ACFOA believes peace and justice in East Timor are best served by the conduct of a genuine act of self-determination by the East Timorese people under UN auspices after withdrawal of Indonesian forces".

(Signed Bob Whan, Executive Director ACFOA).

Please note messages should go off at your earliest convenience.

2. Major new Indonesian military offensive under way in East Timor

The ACFOA sub-committee on East Timor is convinced that the Indonesian armed forces have recently launched a major offensive in East Timor aimed at wiping out the remaining nationalist resistance in the interior of the island.

First news that such an offensive was being planned reached ACFOA in August 1980 from sources in Jakarta which learnt of the plan from military sources in Dili and Jakarta.

The large-scale Indonesian military exercises held in East Timor at the end of March this year were, ACFOA believes, the beginnings of this offensive. Recent letters from East Timor and reports from Jakarta have informed ACFOA that some 6000 of the troops engaged in the exercises were to stay behind to join the 12.000 troops already in East Timor and that this force of 18 battalions was to conduct a 'general clean up'.

ACFOA believes it is no coincidence that the March exercises (which involved over 10.000 troops, amphibious landings, parachute drops from Hercules transports, and the deployment of OV-10 Bronco counter-insurgency jets) were concentrated in the Baucau, Laga and Los Palos region of eastern East Timor where the resistance is known to be active. Furthermore, the departure in mid-April of the only effective outside organisation in East Timor, the International Red Cross, has cleared the way, ACFOA believes, for the Indonesian army to conduct an offensive free of foreign constraint.

The Department of Foreign Affairs in Canberra has confirmed the troop movements in East Timor in March adding that, while it has no evidence that troops were left behind, this would be possible.

It should be emphasised that an offensive of this nature is completely consistent with the reality in East Timor. Timorese resistance, military and otherwise, is continuing as are Indonesian attempts to suppress it. Wholesale

arrests of thousands of people have been made since late last year. Some 5000 prisoners are confined on the off-shore island of Atauro alone, one of the four prisons known to exist. Perhaps the ugliest brutality learnt of recently was the execution in February this year of five Timorese whose heads were subsequently displayed in the market place of Laga.

Frustrated by continuing internal resistance to its plans and continuing international censure of its takeover (at the UN in particular), the Indonesian military is absolutely determined to 'solve' the East Timor problem. If necessary, it appears, it will engage in genocide to subjugate the East Timorese.

ACFOA believes that only the most forceful public protest coupled with requests to visit the territory and support for the current Portugal-UN initiative, will offset the terrible consequences for the long-suffering Timorese.

Yours sincerely,

Pat Walsh

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